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# THE SOFTS

THE

# TRUE DEMOCRACY

OF THE

## State of New-York.

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MAY 25th. 1856.

NEW-YORK:

1856.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

TOWARDS the close of the third week of the present month of May, it began to be whispered, in well informed political circles in New York city, that a Manifesto in ambush was being, or about to be, secretly circulated, among the Southern delegates to the Cincinnati Convention, under the auspices of the Hard-Shell State Committee. Boasts were confidentially made that it was a "heavy gun" which would infallibly "blow the Softs sky-high," and secure the admission to the National Council, of the factionists, who, since the days of Jackson, have labored to disjoint the party to which they unfortunately belong.

Inquiry was made at head quarters ; but the existence of the production in question was emphatically denied. On the 17th of May, a gentleman was

informed, at the Daily News Office, that no document of the kind had been seen there, and that they were not aware that any such was in course of preparation. On the same day, however, the wilful falsity of this assertion was discovered ; as the very same individual obtained, though with much difficulty, possession of the pamphlet itself. It bears date “*April, 1856.*” and purports to be “*Printed at the Daily News Job Office :*” though, if rumor among the Hards themselves may be credited, even this *imprimatur* is untrue—the sheets of the manuscript having been distributed among various printing offices, in order that no complete copy might fall into other hands than those of the initiated. However this may be, its existence was kept a profound secret for nearly a month, and was only discovered at last, by the garrulous boasting of an indiscreet partizan.

The title of the pamphlet referred to is as follows:—“*New York Hards and Softs. Which is the true Democracy? A brief statement of facts for the consideration of the Democracy of the Union, showing the origin and cause of the continued ‘division of the party.’*”

It consists of eighty double column, closely printed, octavo pages, divided into ten chapters, professing to give a history of the Democratic party in the State of New York, from April, 1843, up to the present time. [Its details are devoted to the most puerile gossip with regard to local interests, and the personal concerns of a few prominent, and many very insignifi-

cant men. It abounds in slander, and its allegations have been dovetailed together with unusual care by an experienced and interested adept in mendacity, who has suppressed every thing which could injure his cause, distorted nearly every fact he has related, and, in many instances, resorted to the foulest and most glaringly unscrupulous falsehoods. It is the last resource of political desperadoes, who have not shrunk from *an atrocity*, under the delusion that it would prove fatal to their enemies before it could be discovered.

For many years, "rule or ruin" has been, proverbially, the guiding principle of the Hard Shell faction of the New York Democratic party. But the weapons they have used, must now recoil upon themselves : and, with the recognition, by the National Convention, of the regular Democratic organization, our state discords will cease, traitors be driven to seek refuge where they belong, and the palmy days of unbroken Democratic rule be restored.

The National Democratic Convention, about to convene at Cincinnati, is the High Court of Appeal to which members of the Democratic party in the United States acknowledge allegiance, respecting dissensions, local or general, which may have arisen within it. The imperative duty devolves, therefore, upon the delegates who assemble quadrennially from all parts of the Union, of dispassionately and impartially examining and deciding upon those questions, concerning principles or organization, which may be laid before them. No personal feelings should in-

duce them to shrink from the performance of this obligation, or from determining claims from individual States, in such a manner as is most in accordance with justice, and conducive to the national welfare. The Democracy of New York looks to them, at the present conjuncture, to heal evils of nearly ten years standing, which, without their interposition, threaten to destroy the strength of their party, and to transfer its power to sectionalists and fanatics.



## CHAPTER II.

### THE QUESTION OF REGULARITY.

The proximate question to be decided by the Cincinnati Convention is—Which is the Regular Democratic organization of the State of New York, and which is schismatic? This point must, therefore, be examined by itself, detached, as far as possible, from every side issue.

IT IS AN UNDISPUTED FACT, ADMITTED BY HARDS AS WELL AS SOFTS, THAT THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY IN NEW YORK WAS UNITED IN 1850, 1851 AND 1852, and continued so UNTIL THE 13TH OF SEPTEMBER, 1853. This FACT is the basis, on which a decision of the question of regularity must rest.

The existing division between Softs and Hards has no direct connection with the Hunker and Barnburner dissensions of 1848. It took place on the afternoon of the 13th of September, 1853, and has continued from that day until the present time. Whichever, therefore, of the two sections of the party, created, and has perpetuated, the rupture which occurred on that day, cannot claim to possess the regular organization. Whichever section was regular then, is regular now, and its delegates must, of course, to the exclusion of the others, be admitted to the National Convention. If the Hards were right then, they are right now; and the Soft delegates deserve to be sent home to a man. If they, on the

contrary, were schismatic then, they have, for two years and a half, persevered, refractorily, in opposing the will of the party, and preventing its success, and justice demands that not a voice should be given to them, in deciding upon the great questions, concerning principles and men, which agitate the country.

The Regular Democracy of the State of New York, ask then for a close and critical examination into the 13th of September proceedings, and entertain no doubts as to the result of the inquiry.

## CHAPTER III.

## HEART-BURNINGS IN 1850, 1851 AND 1852.

1.—Although the New York Democracy acted in harmony, during the years 1850, 1851 and 1852, there existed among the Hunkers, during that period, an “*adamantine*” element, adverse to peace and unity, excepting on condition of the absolute sway of a few of their own leaders.

2.—It cannot be too vividly kept in remembrance by those who would comprehend our State divisions, that the “Soft” organization is not, and never has been, identical with the Barnburner party of 1848. The strife of 1848, ceased towards the end of 1849, at which time the Hunker and Barnburner parties, properly so called, were extinguished. The ultraists of the former section, have since then become Adamantines and Know Nothings, while those of the latter, have gradually become absorbed by Black Republicanism.

3.—In 1849, the majority of the Barnburners, regretting the extreme ground they had taken the year previous, waived the advantage their greater numbers in the State gave them, and accepted the olive branch proffered by the Hunkers. The consequence was the Convention at Rome, at which a vast majority of the Hunkers exhibited laudable eagerness to arrange difficulties. They “SOFTENED” towards their

*quondam* adversaries, and that basis of permanent union among conciliatory and disinterested Democrats was laid, which resulted in the successes of the three following years.

4.—The demagogue Hunkers, who deprecated the compromise of 1849, because it did not secure to themselves the control of the Democracy, sneeringly nicknamed *their own majority* "SOFTS." They who were in the minority, adopted the name of "HARDS." The Softs were neither the entire Hunker, nor the whole Barnburner division ; but formed, thenceforth, the dominant power in the State of New York, and were composed of nearly all the rank and file of the Democracy, under leaders chosen indiscriminately, regardless of past differences.

5. It is all important that the misapprehension should be corrected which has been created, by Adamantine endeavors to identify, in the minds of Democrats outside of New York, the Softs, with the Barnburners of 1848. The absurdity of this fiction is easily proved. 1. Previous to 1849, the *Softs proper were all Hunkers*. 2. The ultra Barnburners, subsequently to 1849, never existed as a distinct organization. They divided into three categories, *i. e.*, the majority, who cordially and from principle, adopted the "Soft" compromise : those ultraists who gradually separated from the Democracy, and, in the progress of events, became Black Republicans ; \* and a few turbulent demagogues, who have

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\* A manifesto appeared in the *N. Y. Evening Post* of May 17th, signed by a considerable number of ex-Barnburners, protesting against the Ne-

clung, with Free soil sentiments, to the skirts of the re-united Democracy, from the same personal motives which have actuated the Hards in an opposite extreme. 3. The bitterness of the Adamantines, has been at all times especially directed against the Softs who left them, who formerly composed their masses; while they have occasionally manifested towards the Barnburners that have become Black Republicans, as well as towards Know Nothings, no small degree of sympathy. 4. The character of Soft platforms has been *national*, and the principles embodied in the resolutions of their Conventions, have at all times widely differed from those of the old Barnburner assemblages.

6.—From 1849 until 1853, the Adamantine Hunkers were in so small a minority, that they were compelled to submit to the will of the predominating party, under its new auspices. They, nevertheless, grasped at all the offices within its gift, and continued, during that period, to employ intrigue, fraud and force to obtain control of the Democratic State organization.

7. The presidential conflict of 1852, produced a lull in state Democratic warfare : but for no other reason than is stated by the anonymous pamphleteer from the Daily News' office,—that “ *the prevailing*

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braska platform of the Soft Democracy, and avowing their intention no longer to support that organization. Most of the signers had already become Black Republicans. Some were formerly Hard Hunkers; but their movement illustrates that those who retain the principles of the Barnburners of 1848, have no sympathy with the Softs now.

*impression was, that the Hards would be most in favor with Pierce, and secure the Federal offices"!*

8. The hopes of the Adamantines were partially disappointed ; and the consequence was the bitterest animosity against the President, and the promulgation of the absurd slander, gravely endorsed by the Hard libellist, that Mr. Marcy had " entered into a written pledge " of Free Soil Van Burenism to the Soft leaders, and that Mr. Pierce was " aware of that pledge !"

9. The appointment of New York Democrats to office, by Gen. Pierce, was in conformity with the compromise of 1849-50, though the Hunkers were decidedly favored.\* His appointees were, however, expected to fulfil, in detail, the conditions of that compromise. It is well known that the Adamantines absolutely refused to bestow place upon any individuals whose interests were not entirely identified with the personal aggrandizement of Mr. Dickinson. Nor is it at all disguised that from the hour of the appointment as Secretary of State of Mr. Marcy, instead of Mr. Dickinson, they resolved upon

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\* In regard to the appointments to office in this State, by far the greater portion were conferred upon the supporters of Gen. Cass in 1848. In this city the officers are, Collector of the Customs, Naval Officer, Surveyor, District Attorney, Marshal, Postmaster, Navy Agent, and Naval Store-keeper—in all eight. Six out of the eight were conferred on Cass men—two only, the Postmaster and Surveyor, having supported Mr. Van Buren in 1848, in opposition to General Cass. The office of Assistant Treasurer was also filled by an individual who had supported Mr. Van Buren in 1848. This individual resigned within a few months, and the present incumbent, a Cass democrat, appointed in his place. The office of Superintendent of the Assay Office was subsequently conferred on a Cass democrat.

war with the Administration, and a renewal of the split in the party.

10. On the 15th of January, 1853, the new General Committee of New York city, met for organization at Tammany Hall. The certificate of the majority of three inspectors is requisite, in order to hold a place in that Committee. The Hards made the absurd pretension that not those who had such a majority should hold places on the Committee ; but that either only they who had *three* votes, or *all* claimants, should be allowed to vote ; because, says the Hard pamphleteer, "If those who held the certificates of two inspectors out of three were allowed to vote along with those who held the certificate of three inspectors, then the Softs had a majority. The Hards maintained that those certified to by three inspectors, were the only uncontested delegates, and ought alone to vote on the preliminary organization ; or else, they held that all the contestants should participate. The Softs insisted that the certificate of either *three* or *two* inspectors, qualified the holder for voting." The untenable position of the Hards was a mere trick, and was frustrated. At the instigation of Alderman Barr, the Hard minority withdrew from Tammany Hall, and two organizations consequently took place.

11. The Tammany Hall schism, of small account in itself, prepared the way for the Syracuse split. It was spoken of at the time, by Adamantines themselves, as a petty revolutionary act ; but the men who schemed it, participated in the latter division,

and, as will presently be seen, paid money to crush out their rivals by violence.

12. Before describing the proceedings at Syracuse, it is proper to state that the Hard delegates to that Convention, possessed every advantage over their adversaries. Mr. Minor C. Story, now a Know Nothing, was the chairman of the State Committee, an ultra Adamantine, and the power of calling the meeting was in their hands.



## CHAPTER IV.

## THE SYRACUSE CONVENTION OF 1853.

It has been seen that such progress had been made, after 1849, towards the re-union of the opposing sections of the Democracy in the State of New York, that they both sat together in 1850, '51 and '52, in the same State Conventions, called by one State organization which had replaced all others, and supported and elected, as one party, one set of candidates, nominated by them as a Democratic State ticket.

In September, 1853, a State Convention was again called at Syracuse, to be held at noon of the 13th of that month. It was convened by the State Central Committee, in whom had been lodged, by the National Convention of 1852, without dissent, the entire power of the organization. No place in Syracuse was specified for the meeting ; but, as the Convention was to be held on Tuesday, the Common Council of Syracuse, on Monday evening, had appropriated to its use the spacious room in the City or Market Hall, in which all Democratic Conventions had been held, for a long series of years. It was by far the most ample and convenient locality in Syracuse, and so little doubt existed that the Convention would be held there, that the usual announcement had been made to that effect in the Democratic and Whig papers, and by means of handbills posted up

in various parts of the City, and upon the walls of the Market Hall itself. Placards had also been put up, caricaturing the Soft delegates, and one, vituperative of Mr. Seymour, attracted unusual attention, on account of its scurrilous and irritating character.

Up to about ten o'clock of the 13th of September, not the whisper of a suspicion had been breathed, that Market Hall would not be the place of meeting. Every one in Syracuse, excepting a select band of conspirators, supposed that the Convention would there assemble. At ten o'clock, however, it became accidentally known that a caucus of Hards was being held with closed doors, and that so far from going to Market Hall, private instructions had been issued to their friends to withdraw quietly from there, and to convene at such place as they should be notified of in writing, signed by Minor C. Story and James I. Johnson. A majority of the State Committee, were excluded from this secret caucus, so that no necessity existed for the recognition of its authority. Nevertheless, it had been rumored, for several weeks, that the Hards were resolved upon making a new split in the party, and the Softs were equally determined to submit even to indignity rather than jeopard the unity, for which they had already sacrificed so much. The members of the State Committee who were at Market Hall, therefore commissioned Messrs. Dean Richmond, Horatio Ballard, and others, to call on Mr. Story and ascertain, if possible, what new arrangements were anticipated. Mr. Story informed them that he, *individually*, as chairman of the State

Committee, possessed exclusive authority to name a place of meeting ; but he peremptorily refused to say whether the Convention would be called together at the City Hall, or when and where he and his friends would assemble. Mr. Story was then informed that a quorum of the State Committee were desirous of uniting with him, in designating any place he might decide upon ; but he declined to meet the Committee.

No provocation whatever had been given by the Softs, either individually or collectively, for this unprecedented course of action. It was a preconcerted plan of the Hards, for the purpose of fraudulently attaining the control of the Democratic organization in the State, failing which, force was to be employed to exclude the Soft delegates from the place of meeting, and, in case neither violence nor deceit should be successful, a rupture was to be resorted to.

Under these embarrassing circumstances, the majority of the members of the Convention remained quietly together at Market Hall, until nearly 12 o'clock : but without organizing. One or two Hards staid with them, acting as decoys to blind the Softs with regard to the Adamantine proceedings. In the meanwhile, Messrs. Story, Johnson, Green, Barr, and their associates, were busily engaged in seeking out some remote and unsuspected corner, where they might meet secretly, rapidly organize, and adjourn before they could be joined by the rest. They selected a private building, the fourth story of which

was known as Brintnall's Dancing Academy, and, after due preparations had been made, as will presently be shown, for the exclusion of the Soft delegates, a handbill was printed, to the effect that the Convention would meet at Brintnall's—"HALL"!

The handbill was received at Market Hall, at about twenty minutes before twelve o'clock. At first, it was regarded as a hoax, and the decoys strove to give credit to this opinion. No such "Hall" existed, and it was feared that, while they were attempting to hunt up the new place of meeting, Story and his allies would pass into Market Hall, and organize their cabal. An Orange County Hunker saw through the whole scheme of villainy which had been laid. He explained the dancing academy *quid pro quo*, and called upon all present to accompany him, to what became thenceforth famous as "Brintnall's Hall."

It was a hot day: but the Softs set forth on a dead run. They arrived breathless at the doors of the Academy, and found them locked, bolted, and guarded by bullies, who refused them admittance. The Adamantines were rapidly filling the room and the orchestra platform by a back entrance, when, by some misunderstanding or mismanagement among the conspirators themselves, the doors were unclosed and the Softs were enabled to go in.

The entrance of the Softs into the confined space of Brintnall's Dancing Academy, and the subsequent proceedings, are described as follows, by the mendacious pamphleteer of the Adamantines:—

"The hall was crowded with federal and State officials, and

among the notabilities present, for the first time, at a State Convention, was a delegation of the bruisers, pugilists, and "short boys" of New York city. A gang of from 50 to 75 of these creatures, furnished with free tickets and well primed with liquor, had come up by the railroad the night before, brought hundreds of miles from their ordinary haunts, for purposes which required no explanation, and admitted of no excuse. Among them were many of those known to have acted with the gang which broke into the Tammany Committee room in December, and who had been since rewarded and recognized by appointments under *Mr. Cochrane*, and other Soft New York officials. The faces and names of most of these desperadoes were familiar, and their occupation notorious among New Yorkers, but the delegates from the 'Rural Districts' contemplated their presence with surprise, as all did with apprehension.

"A few minutes before twelve o'clock, while the hall was slowly filling up with people, the sudden and noisy entrance of this gang of miscreants into the room startled all persons present. They forced their way roughly and tumultuously through the spectators, and took possession of the platform, upon which Minor C. Story, Hard, the Chairman of the State Committee, and two or three reporters were standing. A number of leading Softs, who entered at the same time, and along with this delectable company, were assisted by their fellows to mount the platform; among these were *William H. Ludlow*, Surveyor *Cochrane*, Postmaster *Fowler*, Thomas Dunlap, of New York, John Van Buren and others. Great noise and confusion ensued, and, at the call of *Mr. Cochrane*, loud cheering was given by the gang, which had taken possession of the platform. As soon as a lull in the noise occurred, Mr. Story mounted a table, and (as was his right, as Chairman of the State Committee) called the Convention to order, and nominated Ira P. Barnes, (Hard,) of Chenango, as temporary Chairman. Mr. Story put the question and declared it carried. At the same moment Edward N. Madden, of Orange, (now a "Black Republican" State Senator, then Soft,) nominated John B. Skinner, of Wyoming, (Soft,) for temporary Chairman, and declared *his* motion carried. The fighting men handed Mr. Skinner upon a table; Mr. Barnes managed to mount alongside him. Each Chairman entertained and put a motion to appoint a Secretary; and on the Hard side WILLIAM F. RUSSELL, of Ulster, and on that of the Softs, Hiram A. Béebe, of Tioga, (Postmaster,) were chosen. Gen. AARON WARD, (Hard,) in vain appealed to the rowdies to leave the platform and remain quiet. An attempt at calling the roll of delegates was then made by each Secretary, but in the midst of the tumult and confusion little was accomplish-

ed. A motion was then made to adjourn till four o'clock, put by Chairman Barnes and declared carried by him, and the Hards left the hall. The Soft Chairman received and put a similar motion, and the section over which he presided also separated.

"A 'National Democratic' (Hard) Caucus was called to meet at the Globe Hotel, at 3 o'clock. All of that section met there. It was ascertained that the gang of pugilists were still keeping guard over the entrance to Brintnall Hall. A majority of delegates being present in the caucus, it was therefore resolved that notice be given to the remainder to re-assemble at the Globe Hotel, and that the members present would not return to Brintnall Hall. At 4 o'clock, therefore, the Hards re-assembled in the large room of the Globe Hotel—Mr. Barnes resuming the chair."

It is almost unnecessary to state that this description is, sentence for sentence, line for line, and syllable for syllable, composed of falsehoods. One hundred eye witnesses, many of them Hunkers, have testified, in public and in private, in writing and by word of mouth, that the entire story respecting the use of violence by the Softs, is a fabrication. No such individuals as New York "bruisers, short boys and pugilists," attended the Convention, and Mr. Corning, President of the Central Railroad Company, has solemnly declared that *not one* "free ticket" was given to any one from New York to go to Syracuse.

It is true, however, that "bullies and short boys" were employed by some of the delegates—but those delegates were the Hards themselves. Violence was not used or offered in a single instance by any Softs or their friends; but the affidavits below, the originals of which are in existence, prove that men had

been hired to "*throw the Softs out of the windows*" and break up the Convention.\*

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\* AFFIDAVIT OF CHARLES WOODRUFF.

State of New York, }  
Onondaga County, } ss:

CHARLES WOODRUFF of the city of Syracuse, being duly sworn, deposes and says that he resides in the city of Syracuse, and has for a great number of years: that he was at Syracuse on the 12th and 13th days of September 1853. That on Monday morning, September 12th, he was standing on the steps of the Syracuse House, when he was approached by John A. Green Jr., of the city of Syracuse and of the firm of Jaycox and Green, who introduced him to the Hon. Daniel B. Taylor, of the city of New York. Deponent further says that immediately after such introduction the said Daniel B. Taylor asked him if he knew what was to be done in the Convention to-morrow: that he replied to him, that he did not. That said Taylor then said that John Van Buren, John Cochrane and others had engaged a lot of rowdies, twelve or fifteen in number, to come to Syracuse and break up the Convention, and he wanted to know if the Syracuse people would allow such a thing to be done: deponent replied to him, no they will not, and said Taylor left him and went in company with David S. Geer, of Syracuse, to Jaycox and Green's Store. In the afternoon the said Daniel B. Taylor, David S. Geer, John A. Green Jr., and John M. Jaycox came to where deponent was standing on the Syracuse House steps and said they had been looking to find him, and wanted to know if he couldn't raise a lot of the boys to keep the "short boys," that were coming from New York, out of the Convention—that if he could do so he should have all the funds he wanted: deponent replied to them that he could do it. Deponent saw nothing more of them until Tuesday morning the 13th, when as he was coming from his residence to the Syracuse House he met James Hackett, who stopped him and said that Alderman Barr, D. B. Taylor and Minor C. Story had sent him after deponent, said Hackett had Jaycox and Green's horse: thereupon deponent went immediately to the Syracuse House where he found Jaycox, Green and the Hon. D. B. Taylor, who introduced him to Alderman Barr of New York and Minor C. Story. Immediately after the introduction, Story asked deponent if he had done anything: and deponent replied to him, that he had seen a few of "the boys." He then said to deponent "you must be ready" and pointed out to him several men from New York, and said, "that is the party," deponent replied to him, that he could be ready to take care of them by the time the Convention opened. He said, "you know it opens at 12," and deponent replied, yes he knew it. Deponent then left the party and in about fifteen or twenty minutes the

The Soft delegates entered Brintnall's Hall in much haste, but in no disorder. They were accom-

said Minor C. Story came to where deponent was standing in front of Burdick's Tobacco Store, and said to him he wanted him to be on hand, near that place, so that he could let deponent know when the Convention would be held. Deponent replied to him, that he would be on the Syracuse House steps. Said Story then informed deponent, that he was looking for a room, in which to hold the Convention, and that as soon as he obtained one he would let him know.

About fifteen minutes past eleven, the said Minor C. Story, Alderman Barr and the Hon. Daniel B. Taylor came to deponent and said, "Charley," (that being the name by which deponent is familiarly called) you must be on hand, the Convention is to be at Brintnall's Hall, but you must keep still about the place, as we don't want any one but our party to know where it is till we are ready to organize. Have all your men over there promptly at the time, and you shall have all the money you want. We will see you through at all hazards." They then left deponent and in a few minutes he went with John M. Jaycox to see said Story at Brintnall's Hall: he was in company with two or three others, one of whom as deponent was informed and believes was the Honorable Ausburn Birdsall. Story then said to deponent, "I want you to bring your men here and not let any of the New York boys in the Hall, until after the Convention is organized." Deponent then went back to the Syracuse House where the boys had assembled. There was James Hackett, Robert Barrett, Bartholomew Sullivan, Horace D. Britton, John Woodruff Jr., Joseph Pettis, Henry Church, and twelve or fifteen others who returned with deponent to Brintnall's Hall. This occurred before twelve o'clock. When deponent and his party arrived at the hall they were letting in the Adamantine Delegates and their particular friends through the back door at the private entrance, the front, a street door of the Hall, being at the time locked. They were very careful who they let in.

This was about 12 o'clock, and deponent told Story it was best to close up the back door, as the Adamantine delegates were nearly all in the Hall and he would go and keep guard at the front door. Some of deponent's party remained in the Hall, and the balance went with the Honorable Ausburn Birdsall and deponent to the front door. The door on the street was then opened, and the deponent's party remained outside, and Birdsall stood on guard in the door-way. He allowed several gentlemen to pass up stairs, but the door that led into the hall was not open and they came back. About this time all of the delegates and spectators from Market Hall, who had assembled there, supposing the Convention was to be held at that place, came over in a body, several hundreds in num-



panied by but few friends, while the Adamantines were surrounded by the hired Bullies, spoken of in

ber, and went up stairs. Birdsall either stood one side or went up stairs with them—deponent is not positive which. Deponent and his party had expected to oppose any one going up stairs that Birdsall pointed out to them. But as he had been in consultation with Story and Taylor and Deponent as to what was to be done, and was on guard at the door to give directions—without giving any, probably owing to the fact that so large a crowd came from Market Hall as to render any such directions futile, deponent's party offered no resistance to the crowd, composed as it was of a large number of delegates, citizens of Syracuse, and a few of the men pointed out to the deponent by the said Minor C. Story at the Syracuse House. Deponent and his party then went immediately up into the Hall. When they got in, the crowd was very great, but the deponent and his men pushed their way up to the platform. Several of the Boys from New York were up about the platform, and a few of them, with a large number of citizens, were on the stand. Deponent took a place there himself. There was some confusion in the room and some on the stand, but most of the noise and confusion was made by the deponent's party, and the Adamantines who had been admitted at the back door.

Deponent further says that he and his party were there to secure the control of the Convention to the Adamantines, and that they did their full part at the time of the organization to effect that purpose. He further says that no violence of any kind was resorted to by the New York boys or any body else: that if there had been the first indication of violence he and his said party were there to take a part in it, that in point of fact they went there to take any and every means deponent thought best to adopt to secure the organization for the Adamantines, but as there was no attempt, or indication, on the part of any one to show fight, deponent's party made no attack.

Deponent further says that shortly after the Convention adjourned till four o'clock, he went to the Syracuse House, that he had been there but a few moments, when the said Green, Taylor, Alderman Barr and others of their party, met deponent and asked him where his men were, that he replied they were somewhere around. They then asked him why he did not stop those people from coming into the Convention; he replied, that as Birdsall did not order him to stop them, he supposed it was all right to let them in. Some one replied, and deponent thinks it was Alderman Barr—"It is a damned pretty scrape—they have got the Convention from us." Deponent said to him, he guessed not. They then asked him if he could get his men for the Convention at four o'clock, and deponent replied that he could, and left the party.

the affidavits. About a hundred men were already in the room, and Minor C. Story was standing on the

Deponent further says, that the said John A. Green, Jr., came to him shortly thereafter and addressed him as follows:—"Charley will you get your men and go into the Convention when it meets at four o'clock and throw the New York party out of doors if they come into the Hall." Deponent replied to them that he would, if he was furnished with what money he wanted, that without it he would not, as he had then spent all he had. Green then said to deponent, "stand here (deponent was then in front of the Exchange Hotel) ten minutes and I will be back." That said Green went immediately to the Globe Hotel and returned in a few minutes and said:—"We have made up our minds to do this thing for you and the boys. We will give you one hundred dollars if you do the thing up as it ought to be done." Deponent replied to him that would not do, that he wanted some money to treat the boys with and to get them ready. Green then pledged deponent his honor that he would see him paid if the thing was done up right. Deponent then replied to him that he would do it. Deponent further says that he then left said Green and went to work to get his forces together, that he got up a party of something more than thirty men, and went at four o'clock over to the Convention at Brintnall Hall. That when they reached the Hall they pushed their way directly up to the east side of the stand. A portion of the Adamantine delegates were then at Brintnall's Hall, and deponent supposed they were all to come there. Soon after getting located, deponent was about to give his order to his men to throw the New York party and any body else who might oppose them, out of the room, when the said John A. Green, Jr., came to deponent and told him that the Adamantines wanted him and his party at the Globe Hotel. Immediately thereafter deponent notified his men, and they left the Convention and went with him to the Globe Hotel, where they remained till about eight o'clock in the evening. Deponent further says that just before the party broke up, the said John A. Green, Jr., came to him and asked him how much he wanted, that he replied to him that he wanted the hundred dollars, that said Green replied that he did not think that was right, as no one had been whipped. Deponent said that was no fault of his or of his party, and that it would have been done as Story and Barr directed, if they had not been called off just as they were going at it. That said Green then went up stairs at the Globe and in a few minutes returned with twenty-five dollars. Deponent told him he was not doing the fair thing, as he had paid our more than thirty dollars himself. He then said he could not help it, and paid deponent ten dollars; Robert Barrett, five dollars, James Hackett, five dollars, and Horace D. Britton five dollars. Deponent further says that he then told

platform, preparing to organize the Convention, although it was ten minutes before the time. On be-

said Green, that if he or his party, had any more such serapes to attend to, he would have to get somebody besides him to do his work for him. and further deponent saith not.

CHARLES WOODRUFF.

Sworn before me this 17th day of October '53.

J. HURST, Com. Deeds, Syracuse.

AFFIDAVIT OF ROBERT BARRETT.

*State of New York,* } ss :  
*Onondaga County.* }

ROBERT BARRETT, of Syracuse, in said County, being duly sworn, deposes and says that he has heard the affidavit of Charles Woodruff, here, to annexed, read: that he participated with said Woodruff as stated by him in said affidavit, and that the facts therein stated by him as far as he is acquainted with the proceedings, are true, and he says that he was one of the parties named, and was with Woodruff at the time and in the manner referred to in said affidavit.

ROBERT BARRETT.

Sworn before me on this 17th day of October '53.

J HURST, Com. Deeds, Syracuse.

AFFIDAVIT OF JAMES HACKETT.

*State of New York,* } ss :  
*Onondaga County.* }

JAMES HACKETT, of Syracuse, in said county, being duly sworn, deposes and says that he resided in the city of Syracuse, on the 13th day of September, 1853, that he has read the affidavit of Charles Woodruff, hereto annexed, that he is one of the parties alluded to by said Woodruff, that he went on the morning of the 13th of September, 1856, at the request of John A. Green, Hon. Daniel B. Taylor, and a man they called Minor C. Story, after Charles Woodruff, that he had Jaycox and Green's horse, that he met said Woodruff on his way from his house to the Syracuse house, and told him he had been sent after him by Taylor and Story, that Woodruff went immediately after this to the Syracuse house, and met said Green. Story and Taylor. Deponent further says that he was engaged with said Woodruff and the parties named by him to go to said Brintnall Hall, as specified in said Woodruff's affidavit, and that he went there before the organization at 12 o'clock, and again at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. That deponent went to carry out with said Woodruff, and the party of boys with him, the object stated by said Woodruff in his affida-

ing remonstrated with, he waited ; but when twelve o'clock came, and most of the delegates had assembled, his enthusiasm and haste had disappeared, and it was with the greatest difficulty he could be got to organize at all. He did, however, finally rise and call the Convention to order, nominated Mr. Barnes

vit. and that all the facts occurred as stated by said Woodruff. That after the meeting at Brintnall Hall, at the organization, he heard said Green offer to pay said Woodruff the \$100 as stated, and that he was present at the time the \$25 was paid over, at the Globe Hotel, and that it was paid over as stated in this affidavit.

JAMES HACKETT.

Sworn before me this 17th day of Oct. '53.

J. HURST, Com. of Deeds, Syracuse.

The writer of this pamphlet, having heard that counter affidavits contradictory of the above, had been subsequently made, solicited information upon the subject from Mr. Dillaye, of Syracuse. The following is his response to this request :—

NEW YORK, May 20, 1856.

Dear Sir,

It may be stated that Robert Barrett and James Hackett made affidavits, in which they claim that the affidavit of James Woodruff was not read to them as printed, and that they would not have sworn as they did, if they had understood Woodruff's affidavit.

In relation to this, allow me to say, that each sentence was distinctly read to Barrett and to Hackett, and that each one of them dictated the affidavit signed and sworn to, on the 17th of October.

After hearing of their having made counter affidavits, each excused himself for having so done by saying, that, before signing or swearing to them, they were told as an inducement to sign them, that they were extra judicial, and that it would not be perjury to swear to the statements in them if false, and that they were paid for making the counter affidavits.

They have gratuitously offered to make affidavits of these facts.—Thinking such affidavits wholly unnecessary, I have declined receiving them.

Very truly yours,

STEPHEN DILLAYE.

for Chairman, and immediately declared it carried, although Mr. Barnes had not received one out of three of the votes of the delegates. Mr. Madden (then a Hunker) protested, and nominated Mr. Skinner (also a Hunker) as Chairman. Excepting those of the few Adamantines, Mr. Skinner received the votes of the Convention, and was also declared to be Chairman. The suggestion was immediately made by General Aaron Ward, that, to prevent discord or confusion, *both* gentlemen should act as Chairmen. This was assented to *unanimously*, without the slightest disorder or violence, and the two gentlemen took their seats. It was then proposed, and unanimously carried, that each Chairman should appoint a teller. Mr. Grant was appointed teller by Mr. Barnes, and Mr. Madden by Mr. Skinner. It was further moved and carried that each should appoint a Secretary, and Mr. Beebe, of Ulster, was appointed by one, and Mr. Russell, of Ulster, by the other. All this was done in entire peace and harmony, with perfect unanimity, and *all six of the officers thus named were Hunkers*.

The Convention at Brintnall's Hall, having been thus peaceably organized, the roll was called, and ninety eight uncontested delegates answered to their names, and were entered on the roll. Of these, sixty eight were with the Softs, and thirty were Adamantines. Thirty one seats were contested, in nearly every instance upon frivolous pretexts. No diffi-

culty, however, arose concerning them, every delegate or claimant being heard, the rights of all equally recognized, and the proceedings conducted without one solitary expression of dissatisfaction, or complaint of unfairness.

It may be stated here, that, if every one of the contested seats had been bestowed upon the Hards, the latter would still have been in a minority of seven or eight in the Convention. This is a fact which never has been, and never can be denied. It is a fact, too, of the utmost importance, as it clearly substantiates the claims of the Softs to the regular organization, even if every one of the falsehoods of their enemies were true. It annihilates, of itself, the pretensions of the Hards, and conclusively demonstrates their schismatic character.

Nevertheless, the thirty one Hard contestants could not have been admitted to the Convention. Subsequent investigations proved that they were *all* sent to Syracuse as a part of the rule or ruin conspiracy, and that their claims were without foundation. The Softs were, therefore, in reality, in possession of ninety nine votes, while their adversaries were in a miserable minority of twenty nine votes, out of one hundred and twenty eight.

The order of business having been completed, General Ward, of Westchester, arose and moved that, as "the list had been completed and *order restored*," the Convention should take a recess till 4

P. M.—to meet again “*at the same place.*” Some opposition was made to this motion, but it was eventually declared carried, by both Chairmen, and the Convention adjourned.

The Hards, however, too weak to conquer, and their deceits exploded, had resolved to secede. This was suspected by some of the Softs, and therefore Mr. Skinner went down to the Globe Hotel, where Mr. Barnes was staying, and inquired of him whether he would return. Mr. Barnes replied,—“Certainly, I shall return to Brintnall Hall at 4 o’clock. I know where the meeting is to be, and shall be there at 4 o’clock.”

At 4 P. M. of the 13th September, 1853, the Convention re-assembled at Brintnall Hall, the majority of delegates, being present, and all the officers chosen during the proceedings of the morning taking their places, except Mr. Barnes himself, who had been designated as one of the Chairmen, and had told Mr. Skinner half an hour before that he should be there! After waiting some fifteen or twenty minutes, a Committee, consisting of three Hunkers—Messrs. Mabbett, Bowdish, and Taylor was sent to apprise Mr. Barnes and his associates, that their return was awaited. After an absence of half an hour the Committee, through their Chairman, Mr. Mabbett of Dutchess, returned and informed the Convention that they had found Mr. Barnes closeted in a room in the Globe Hotel, apparently acting in a meeting

there assembled, and that he had handed the Chairman of the Committee the following communication, in writing :

I have been waited upon by James Mabbett, Esq., of Dutchess, requesting my attendance at Brintnall's Hall to act as presiding officer in conjunction with the individual who claims to have been selected for that purpose. My reply is, that myself and friends do not consider our lives in safety in an assemblage controlled and overawed by bullies, imported for that purpose, and therefore respectfully present my compliments to the persons there assembled, and decline participating further therein.

Very respectfully yours,

IRA P. BARNES.

September 13, 1853.

This letter was received with mingled roars of laughter and expressions of surprise. It was the first intimation the Convention had had of the existence of any violence or even disorder, or of confusion, such as to interrupt the progress of its business. The charge was a libel on the character of the Convention and of the city in which it was assembled. It was equally an insult to those who made it and to those from whom it emanated, who must have known that they would have found protection at the hands of the majority, and the large and respectable audience in attendance, against any violence threatened or intended. No menace of that character had been made, as is proved by the message itself, and the whole course of proceedings, both before and afterwards. The pretence was the last excuse of a small body of delegates and



others, to bring about a secession from the Convention ; and its falsity and frivolousness are the conclusive evidences of the absence of all just and reasonable grounds, in the action of the majority, for dissent or estrangement.

Up to the time that this announcement was made, there had been, as has been said, no division in the Convention. The two delegates named as Chairmen, were appointed without dissenting votes, and had co-operated throughout the proceedings. The two tellers and the two secretaries, unanimously appointed on the nomination of the two Chairmen, had acted together with entire good feeling in perfecting the list of delegates. Ninety-eight uncontested delegates had presented their credentials, and been enrolled as members, and the *animus* of the Democracy of the State had been fully signified.

It must not be supposed that the Hards were able to draw after them, even the rank and file of their own section of the party. The dwarfish vote which their ticket has since obtained, when unaided by Know Nothingism, is notorious. Many Hards were disgusted at the course of their leaders. Mr. Ogden, in a noble speech, two weeks after the Convention, exclaimed—

“ What was the union of the party in New-York, begun and urged on by Croswell, Beardsley, Dickinson and others, in 1849, followed up and still urged, in 1850, and finally, fully completed and perfected in 1851 ; upon what was it based ? Why, gentlemen, it was based upon the good old time honored

Baltimore Platform—a platform that I love and reverence—a platform broad and deep and strong enough for all; it held the party in the days of Jackson, and from that day to this, and will hold it safely enough for the next half century; a platform of principle that foreshadowed good government, that defines the powers of the General Government, that sacredly guards the rights of the States, that presents a sound policy and right measures—a broad National Platform, one which throws its protecting power on all the States, and binds the whole confederacy into a strong, powerful, glorious Republic—a Platform, which in the language of our illustrious President, ‘knows no North, no South, no East, no West, but one common country under a common and glorious Constitution.’ Upon that noble old platform then, the Democratic party of New York united, there all agreed to stand, and standing, battle for the right. And was it a coalition, a base, corrupt coalition? Then is your Baltimore Platform a coalition. Then are your most cherished political principles base and corrupt. Not a word was said in the Convention of 1852, about men, not a word about the spoils of office. Until the agreement was come to on principles, *until the platform and resolutions reported by Charles O’Conor*, in 1850, was reported by the committee and unanimously adopted by the Convention; then, and not till then, was a ticket named and placed upon the platform, and then they stood on solid ground and around them we all rallied, forgetting that we were Hunkers or Barnburners; but standing in solid column and compact mass upon our ancient faith, we bore them on to victory. This, then, was the union of the Democratic party in New York, and was it not an honorable one, one which reflects great credit upon all the parties to it? For one, I think so, and I am not going to turn my back upon it. Under the lead of the Albany *Argus*, and those who are now Adamantine leaders, I entered into the work of reuniting the Democratic party; under their lead I persevered, until the work was accomplished; I am not ashamed of it, and am not going to desert it, although now urged to do so by those who began the movement.”

Abundant proof of the conciliatory disposition of the Softs at the Syracuse Convention, is afforded by the fact that, when the secession of the Adamantines became known, Mr. Skinner was immediately re-elected Chairman, by a vote of sixty-four out of the nine-

ty-eight uncontested delegates, whose names had been inserted on the roll in the morning. The same vote had been given at 12 o'clock ; yet the Softs un-murmuringly yielded to Mr. Barnes, the rival Chairman, who had received but thirty votes, the same authority that belonged to the Chairman whom they had legitimately elected.

The refusal of a minority of delegates to return to the Convention after the recess, under circumstances revealing so much bad faith, and such falsity of pretence, was the consummation of a conspiracy, long formed, to break down the Democratic party in the State, and to reinstall the dynasty of Sewardism, and by swerving New York from her place in the National Democracy, to strike the first blow at FRANKLIN PIERCE. The evidence of such a combination on the part of certain professing Democrats, with the leaders of the most unscrupulous section of the Whig party, was made manifest in the course of legislation, and in the action upon appointments at Albany, in the winter of 1852 ; and it was distinctly traceable in the conduct and tone of the organs of the combination, nominally antagonistic sheets, acting in concert, and stimulated by motives of common interest to destroy the ascendancy of Democratic Government, both in the State and National administrations.

Dispassionate and impartial examination having

been made, it was found that the number of seceders from Brintnall's Hall was only twenty-nine out of one hundred and twenty-eight members of which the State Convention was composed. The schismatic character of those who assembled at Globe Hotel, under the direction of Messrs. Story and others, (most of whom have since become Know Nothings,) was thus fully established. The regular Convention proceeded, therefore, to the election of Mr. Grant, of Oswego, as permanent Chairman, the nomination of a ticket, and the declaration of its principles in a series of resolutions upon National and State topics.

Since the 13th of September, 1853, the Softs and the Hards have never acted together. The former have in vain labored to heal the wounds which personal ambition has inflicted upon the Democratic party; but the Hards have been deaf to every call for reconciliation, excepting upon the old basis of the exclusive rule of a few leaders, who, for ten years, have been the bane of our State politics. The Softs have fought the battle unassisted, against Black Republicanism, Know Nothingism, and party treason, while the Hards have formed alliances with all these elements, in pursuance of their rule or ruin policy. The Softs, admitted to the National Convention at Cincinnati, can guarantee a triumphant majority to the candidate of their party, while the miserable show of votes which has been made by the Hards, at every late election, is the best proof what the destiny of the Democratic party would dwindle to in their hands.

## CHAPTER V.

## ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF THE DIVISIONS IN THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

An infamous attempt has lately been made to ascribe the divisions in the Democratic Party of the State of New York, to differences of opinion on the question of Slavery. How false this is, will not be shown in the present, but in the following chapter. Until 1847, Hunkers and Barnburners were not discordant, in the manner that many have supposed, in their theories upon this subject. The Hunkers, far from being conservative on the slavery issue, had repeatedly coalesced with the Abolitionist interests, and were regarded as a distinct anti-Southern party. They were a Sewardite *corps de reserve*, and, although financial questions were the *prima facie* point of union between them and the Sewardites, they none the less mutually supported each other's interests on sectional questions. The Barnburners, as decentralizers and strict States Rights men, held those views which have since slowly developed into the full and explicit act of political faith, contained in the Kansas Nebraska act.

If the State of New York has ever produced a sincere, upright, and unswerving exponent of Democratic principles, it was in the person of *Silas Wright*.

Temporizing, for the sake of transitory gain, formed no part of his practice. He opposed the Anti-Rent riots of 1845, and quelled the insurrection, then in existence, concerning which his predecessor had permitted the laws to remain in abeyance. He also withstood, with a strong hand, the corruption which William H. Seward had succeeded in introducing into that portion of the Democracy, whom he had seduced by that glitter of speculation in canals and railroads, which characterized his gubernatorial policy. 1837-8, was the grand jubilee period of corruptionists, in our State history. It lasted three years, when it ended with a terrific break down, leaving the State almost bankrupt. Until 1844, the public services of Silas Wright, were in the Senate of the United States : still it was perfectly known that he held firmly to the sound and safe rules and principles of the Democratic party, on the subject of internal improvements.

The Safety Fund Banking system was introduced into the State of New York in 1829, upon the recommendation of Mr. Martin Van Buren, when Governor of that State. Sagacious and experienced Democrats remarked, that the system would be an improvement, if it did not have the effect of making the chartering of banks popular acts of legislation. This abuse, unfortunately, crept in, to such an extent, that, in 1837, persons holding office in all the departments of the State Government were to be found among the subscribers for, and the recipients of the

new stocks, thus lending the influence of their names and example, to the banking impulse.

Even members of the Legislature became subscribers and competitors for the stocks their votes had contributed to create ; and some justified the practice, as a legitimate way of indemnifying themselves for the time and services, for which their legislative pay was considered an inadequate compensation. Prominent Democrats became active in obtaining charters : the political division upon the adoption of the system was referred to, to show that its friends, and not its enemies, should be favored under it ; Democrats became presidents, and cashiers, and directors of banks, and Democratic banks were talked about, as institutions essential to, if not inseparable from that political party.

Silas Wright opposed this mischievous state of things, and the consequence was, that, when his term of service expired, in 1837, as Senator, a secret but vigorous movement was made to defeat his re-election ; and the accidental discovery of the plot, a very few days before the election, only prevented the attempt from being successful : though, once known to the public, it vanished almost in a day, and the authors of the movement were scarcely to be found.

The sagacious and patriotic Jackson had foreseen the paper gambling on foot, and that it was about to convert the whole vast public domain of the United States into irredeemable bank paper. Congress having adjourned, without taking any steps to avert this consummation, in July, 1836, he issued his cele-

brated Specie Circular, so called, and Mr. Wright publicly approved of the act. This was an offence which could not be forgiven, and hence, as well as for his rigid principles upon the subject of public expenditures, he must be struck from his place in the Senate, if these combined influences could give the blow.

√ In May, 1837, all the banks in New York, and nearly all in the Union, suspended specie payments. Mr. Wright was a member of the Senate, and the Chairman of the Committee on Finance of that body. It was his duty to turn his earnest attention to the posture of affairs. He had been one of the most active and determined in getting rid of a National Bank, as the depository of the national treasure; and then his confidence in the State banks had induced him to favor the transfer of that trust to those institutions. Now, they had proved wholly unsafe, if not unfaithful, and the question addressed itself to him in an especial manner,—what should be done?

At the sitting of Congress, in September, 1837, President Van Buren transmitted to Congress his memorable message, recommending the Independent Treasury. Mr. Wright, as the Chairman of the Committee of Finance of the Senate, reported the bill to carry this recommendation into effect, and advocated its passage with all the ability he could command. With material modifications, in some particulars, the bill passed the Senate, *some of the Democratic members, and among them Mr. Wright's colleague, making every possible opposition to it.*



In the House of Representatives, a sufficient number of Democrats joined the Whigs to prevent the passage of the bill there, and it did not then become a law. Among the dissenting Democratic members of the House, some five or six were from New York, out of about thirty Democratic members, then in the delegation.

*Here commenced the Conservative party proper in this State, and Mr. Senator Tallmadge was its head leader.*

This was the origin of the secession in the Democratic party in the State of New York. The Conservatives of 1837 were the *Proto-Hunkers*. Under the lead of Senator Tallmadge they allied themselves with the Whigs, boasted of their treason, and elected Governor Seward to the Chief Magistracy of the State of New York.

William H. Seward is the Arch-fiend of American politics. In the years 1838 and 1839 the whole power of the State passed into his hands. This brought in a policy which literally surfeited the peculiar appetites of the internal improvement and bank Democrats. "The more speedy impulse" was given to the public expenditures, and State Stocks were thrown upon the market in such profusion, as, in less than three years, to break down the credit of the State. A new system of banking was instituted, upon a show of perfect security to the public: banks were manufactured under it with the facility of earthen vessels in a pottery; and, after a very short working of the sys-

tem, they broke with the rapidity and ease of the same earthen vessels.

The rampant abuse of power which characterized the Democratic Conservatives and their Sewardite allies, made the sound Democracy strong, and, in the fall of 1841, the Whigs lost the Legislature, and, in the fall of 1842, the entire power in the State. The new banking system had, however, to use the expressive words of Silas Wright, "married together" the internal improvement and bank interest in the Democratic party, which had previously united for mutual protection.

In 1842, the "stop and pay policy" was introduced by the friends of Mr. Wright, and triumphantly adopted, and it was during the contest which continued from the close of Seward's administration, up to 1846-7, that the term "Barnburners" began to be applied—about 1842—to those who advocated a Jackson-Wright reform policy. In 1846 the corrupt interests of the State had attained a culminating point, and prevented the re-election of Governor Wright. The Conservatives, *alias* the very same leading Hunkers who are now called Adamantines, were determined upon his destruction, and only those who remember the bitterness of party warfare at that period, can form an idea of the animosity which raged among Democrats against Democrats—Sewardite-Hunker corruptionists, against the advocates of the financial system of Andrew Jackson. Wright was defeated—defeated by Hunker Democrats—who polled votes to such an extent in behalf of rotten

Banks, Canal contracts, and Whig alliance, that he received over 53,000 fewer suffrages, than at the election of 1844.

In 1847, the same combination which had defeated Silas Wright, viz., the Hunker-Whigs, prevented the renomination of Comptroller Flagg: and, unfortunately, just at this period, a new and fatal power had been invoked to the assistance of the Barnburners, which caused their past services to be forgotten—made them temporarily the adjuncts of Abolitionism—and delivered over to Seward, Weed & Co. a body of men whom only passion, aided by intrigue, could have induced to pursue the course they did.

Before the year 1847, the Barnburners had been regarded as the allies of the South. An unprecedented agitation upon the subject of Slavery was excited during the progress of the Mexican War. Extreme grounds began to be taken by North and South with reference to the States that might, at future times, be admitted to the Union. The South contended that the Constitution carries slavery into all territories that might be acquired, while Northern fanatics maintained an exactly opposite principle. Under these circumstances, a resolution was introduced into Congress, by Mr. Wilmot, as an amendment to the appropriation bill, to the effect, "that as an express and fundamental condition to the acquisition of any territory from the Republic of Mexico, by the United States, neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall ever exist in any part of said territory."

Anterior to the split at Syracuse, and, consequently, before the secession to Herkimer of the Barnburners, the legislature of New York had resolved, on the 6th of February, 1847, as follows:—"That if any territory is afterwards acquired by the United States, or annexed thereto, the act by which such territory is acquired or annexed, whatever such act may be, should contain an unalterable fundamental article, or provision, whereby slavery or involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, shall be forever excluded from the territory acquired or annexed." This resolution was adopted by both Hunkers and Barnburners—by Barnburners with more misgivings than by Hunkers—Mr. Dickinson having already declared that he was in favor of adopting the principle of the Wilmot Proviso bill, for organizing territories. Later, however, in 1847, the Hunkers discovered that they were in an entire minority in the State of New York, and they resorted to the *ruse* of appearing to ally themselves to Southern interests, in order to gain admission to the Baltimore Convention of 1848.

Two sets of Delegates were thus sent to Baltimore. The Barnburners were acknowledged to be regular, on the score organization; but the National Convention, in hopes of reconciling differences, agreed to receive both Hunker and Barnburner delegations. Feeling ran too high to admit of such an accommodation. The Barnburners returned home, and nominated their own electoral ticket, the conse-

quence of which was, the election of Taylor to the Presidency.

In 1849, a lull took place favorable to peace. The election of Taylor had acted as a sedative. Passion subsided for a time, and the Barnburners and Hunker masses, felt the impracticability of the extremes they had advocated. Accordingly, the Hunker State Committee of that year, proposed that the same time and place should be chosen for the Conventions of both parties, and the reconciliation took place, in September, 1849, which virtually destroyed past differences between moderate men of both sections. The "Soft" Hunkers were the nucleus around which the party rallied, in the era which was to commence. The Barnburners assented to their supremacy, and, but for the irreconcilable spirit, growing out of the miserable, petty ambition of those who from that time prided themselves upon the name of "Hards," the union would have been perpetual.

The Hard pamphleteer characteristically styles the reunion of 1849 "a humiliation of the Hunker" minority. Of course ! And it adds, "Mr. Dickinson delivered a most able and powerful speech in opposition to those resolutions which form the 'Soft' platform from that day to this." He did oppose it indeed ; but be it remembered that his speech was free soil in its character, and antagonistic to resolutions passed by Softs and Barnburners, to the effect that Congress had power to legislate in the territories ; but that the question whether they should ex-

ert it, or the people of the territories themselves, was one to be left to the circumstances of the time. Already, in 1849, the Softs anticipated and affirmed the fundamental principle of the Nebraska Bill.

In 1850, 51, 22, the opposing factions met together in the same Conventions. The Soft Hunkers were sufficiently powerful to compel common action with the Barnburners, although the anonymous pamphleteer from the Daily News Office, confesses that every intrigue was resorted to, in order to break up the reigning concord. In 1850 the united Convention,

*Resolved*, That the Democratic party of New York are proud to avow their fraternity with, and devotion to the great principles of the Democratic party of the Union, as declared at the National Democratic Conventions of 1844 and 1848; and they look forward in hope and confidence to the complete triumph of that party in 1852.

The minority was 27, but they yielded gracefully without rupture in the threat of secession.

In September, 1851, the Democrats of New York re-enacted the above two resolutions, and the following,—

*Resolved*, That we congratulate the country upon the recent settlement by Congress of the questions which have unhappily divided the people of those states.

These resolves were adopted unanimously.

In September, 1852, the next State Convention was held. The following are some portions of their resolutions :—

*Resolved*, That we approve of the views and principles set forth in the Resolutions adopted by the Democratic State Con-

vention, held at Syracuse last year, and now re-affirm said resolutions as follows.

*Resolved*, That it is a subject of sincere congratulation that entire and perfect concord is restored in the Democratic party of New York, and that it again speaks with one voice, acts from a united will, and moves forward to victory with a uniform and unbroken front.

*Resolved*, That we cordially adopt as the sentiment of this Convention; and we affirm the platform of principles contained resolutions of the National Convention held in Baltimore.

The resolutions were copied in full.

These resolves were also adopted unanimously.

The resolves of 1850, '51, and '52 were the universally accepted doctrine of the Democracy of New York.

It will be recollected that the delegates who took their seats in the Baltimore Convention of 1852, which nominated Franklin Pierce, derived their authority from an unbroken organization; and certainly, it has not been forgotten with what unanimity and energy the whole party of the State entered upon the campaign of that year, under the auspices of its then undivided councils. The effort was successful,—the administration of our present Chief Magistrate was inaugurated. Nevertheless, the fire of discontent had been all the while secretly burning, and its full outbreak was confidently awaited by all who understood the adamantine venom. It broke forth at Syracuse, when the schism was accomplished in the manner which has been exposed in a previous chapter. The same men who were opposed to General Jackson up to 1837, and to the independent Treasury scheme; the same men who had over and over again

divided the party in behalf of Sewardite financial corruption, were the agitators in 1853.

If the names of the Hard delegates to Cincinnati are carefully scrutinized, it will be found that all the old politicians, it contains, including Messrs. Beardsley, Ward, O'Connor, and Clinton, the four delegates at large, were anti-Wright Conservatives—*proto-Hunkers*—whose labors have been untiring for ten years to destroy the Democratic party, or else make them subservient to their own demagogue purposes. Fraud, force, bribery, intrigue, and falsehood, have been their weapons from first to last. But their efforts have been in vain, and the brightest prospect is now offered to the Democracy of New York, which it has known for many years. The rank and file of the Hards have become nearly identified with Know-Nothingism; the Free Soil Ultraists of 1848, have become Black Republicans; and the character of those who still adhere to the name of Democrats, while they are false to the principles of the party, is exposed, and their ambitious aspirations forever frustrated. Such calumnies as—"He was unsound in 1848!" "His antecedents were Barnburner," which they have unscrupulously used against any one outside of their own faction, have become denuded scarecrows, by which the common sense of the *people* refuses to be frightened or misled. The *Regular Party* possesses, at the present moment, a majority of the votes of New York, and requires no aid to sweep away sectionalism from the Empire State. They refuse the



aid of Free Soilers ; and the *Hard alliance* would endanger the support of 100,000 foreign born citizens, who turn away in disgust from the Know-Nothingism with which the Adamantines are tainted.

## CHAPTER VI.

## HARDS AND SOFTS ON SLAVERY.

§ 1. THE HARDS.—The principal ground upon which the Adamantines claim the sympathies of Southern Democrats, is their orthodoxy upon the subject of slavery. On the 6th of September, 1855, the Hard Shell General Committee especially recommended the candidates of their schismatic Convention, because they “*never had supported that political heresy, the Wilmot Proviso.*” The hardihood of the falsehood contained in this assertion can scarcely be paralleled.

It may safely be asserted that *not one leading Adamantine* entertained sound views on the Slavery question, anterior to 1847. Nay more, previous to that period, the Barnburners were in favor of subjecting slavery to local legislation, while the Hunkers were undividedly opposed to its admission into territories.

Where was Mr. Dickinson, on the slavery issue, from 1845 to 1849? Was he a Wilmot Proviso man, or opposed to the principle of the amendment introduced, in 1846, by Mr. Wilmot? Let him give testimony himself, concerning his views at that time.

Senator Dickinson presented to the U. S. Senate, March 1, 1847, the resolutions of the New York Legislature, instructing her Senators to vote for incorporating the Wilmot Proviso in “any act” of the

U. S. Government, by which Mexican Territory should be acquired. The bill appropriating "three millions of dollars to facilitate negotiations," was under consideration. On this occasion, he made a speech of considerable length, every sentence of which had evidently been well weighed. He took ground in favor of a vigorous prosecution of the war; fully admitted the power of Congress to pass the Proviso; and alleged that it could "properly" do so, at a future day, when he would vote for it, "instructed or uninstructed." We quote a portion of this famous speech, as we find it in the Appendix to the Congressional Globe, pages 444, 5, 6, 1847 :—

"I would not have added one single word upon the subject of slavery, but it is due to the occasion that *my views upon it should be perfectly understood*. So far as I am advised or believe, the great mass of the people of the north entertain but *one opinion* upon this subject, and that is the same which is entertained by many at the south. They regard the institution as *a great moral and political evil*, and would that it had no existence. They are not unaware of the difficulties which beset it, and do not intend to provoke sectional jealousy and hatred, by *ill-timed and misplaced* discussions. They will not listen to the cry of the fanatic or favor the designs of the political schemer from the north or the south; nor will they ever disturb or trench upon the compromises of the constitution. They believe the institution to be local and domestic—to be established or abolished by the States themselves and alone subject to their control. But being thus the institution of a local sovereignty, and a franchise peculiar to itself, they deny that such sovereignty or its people can justly claim the right to regard it as *transitory and to erect it in the territories* of the U. States, without the authority of Congress, and they believe that *Congress may prohibit its introduction into the territories while they remain such*. And further, its prohibition in the territories will by giving them a free population, as they become States, tend 'to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, *insure domestic tranquility*, provide for the common defence, promote the *general welfare*,

and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.' They have not resisted the admission of slave States, because they are so inhabited, and holding the numerical power in both houses of Congress, the slave States have increased nearly three-fold. But believing that it is for the 'general welfare,' for the benefit of all the States, and not for any part of them, *that free territory should remain so*, and that it is the *legitimate subject of legislation*; they desire, without intending to disturb *existing rights*, at all proper times to discuss, in that spirit becoming brethren of a common household, the influences its extension is calculated to exert upon the human race, and the destinies of the country. And they doubt not, that if upon the whole it shall appear that the heaven born principles for which this Union was formed will be best promoted by such prohibition, that those who believe their pecuniary interest or political relations will be thereby prejudiced *will yield* in a becoming spirit interests so comparatively trivial, to 'promote the general welfare.' Slavery is slowly and silently rolling *its dark wave* towards a tropical sun, and God grant that, in His own good time, its subjects may there find *happy institutions* as well as a congenial clime.

\* \* \* \* \*

"The State I have the honor in part to represent, has considered the subject of this war, and spoken concerning it in her sovereign voice by certain joint resolutions which are now upon our table. She has spoken in a language of patriotic pride becoming the first state in the Union, upon an occasion so prolific of results, and replete with interest. We are again reminded that in a time of fearful peril she raised her own strong arm in aid of the confederacy, and we may read in her elevated and emphatic tone an earnest of her future action. Her resolutions are as follows :

"Resolved, (if the Assembly concur,) That as war now exists between the United States and Mexico, it is the imperative duty of every citizen of this country to sustain its government in all proper measures for the prosecution of the war, in such a manner as our national honor and interests demand, until it shall be terminated by an honorable peace.

Resolved, (if the Assembly concur,) That no peace with Mexico can be regarded as honorable to the United States, which shall not secure from that republic full indemnity for the aggressions which it has committed upon the rights of this country and of its citizens.

Resolved, (if the Assembly concur,) That if any territory is

hereafter acquired by the United States, or annexed thereto, the act by which such territory is acquired or annexed, whatever such act may be, should contain an *unalterable fundamental article* or provision, whereby *slavery* or involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, shall be *forever excluded* from the territory acquired or annexed.

Resolved, (if the Assembly concur,) That the Senators in Congress from this State be instructed, and that the Representatives in Congress from this State be requested, to use their best efforts to carry into effect the views expressed in the foregoing resolutions."

By these resolutions we are instructed to use our best efforts to carry out the views expressed therein, and not merely the sentiments expressed in any one, but in all. But the best mode of attaining the end, seems to have been left for the exercise of our own discretion. The resolution touching the acquisition of territory has been understood by some to instruct us to vote *in this bill* for the amendment, somewhat familiarly known as the 'Wilmot Proviso.' I have read and considered it, in connexion with those which precede it, with much care, and neither so read or understand it. In this I regret to add that I am compelled to differ from my honorable colleague, [Mr. Dix,] but I do so with that kindness and respect which becomes our respective positions, and which has long characterized our personal and official intercourse. The construction which I have given to these resolutions leaves each and every one of them operative and consistent one with another. It is this :

First, support the government in its reasonable measures, until peace shall be obtained, and in that treaty of peace procure indemnity for aggression. If territory is acquired or annexed by negotiation or in any other mode, in the act by which it is acquired and subjected to our jurisdiction, insert a provision prohibiting slavery therein. I will not do that learned and intelligent body which framed and passed these resolutions, the injustice to believe that they regarded an appropriation for the purpose of negotiating a peace, even though territory might subsequently be acquired by the negotiation, an 'act by which territory is acquired'—that they either expected or desired that an 'unalterable fundamental article or provision' would be appended to an appropriation bill, or that they intended to mingle our domestic and our foreign policy by engrafting upon a bill to raise money for negotiation, a clause for the domestic regulation of territory, yet belonging to a foreign and hostile power. The territory supposed to be that contemplated by all, is California, which is now free ; and if it is obtained by us, it is free until it is incorporated by us, *and cannot become*

*a slave territory without the legislation of Congress ; and in and by such legislation, a fundamental article prohibiting slavery can properly be inserted. Such provisions might, to be sure, be stipulated in a treaty of cession, but as it would scarcely become the sovereignty of the United States, or of any single State, to permit a foreign power to interfere in our domestic affairs, no one, it is presumed, would desire to have it thus inserted, and make Mexico a party, and enable her to control it in future. This resolution, then instructs us when any territory shall be brought within our jurisdiction by the act of Congress—whatever act that may be—to insert in such an act a fundamental clause prohibiting slavery (AND SO I AM READY TO VOTE, INSTRUCTED OR UNINSTRUCTED,) but not to insert it in an appropriation bill, designed to facilitate negotiations for a peace, before the negotiation has ever commenced.”*

This speech of Mr. Dickinson's was delivered on the first day of March, 1837. No one will affect to deny that it is an out and out profession of Proviso doctrine. It contains no trace of the Territorial Sovereignty principle, which Mr. Dickinson's flatterers would persuade him that he *originated!* It is worth while to remark, that the Hunker State organ of the time—the Albany *Argus*—lauded Mr. Dickinson's speech highly—specifically italicizing and praising what he said about an Anti-slavery “fundamental article,” to be “hereafter” adopted. He was regarded as the exponent of the opinions of the section of the Democracy to which he belonged,

And now let us see what Mr. Dickinson thought, in 1849, upon the subject of slavery. He said in the Convention at Rome ;—

“I know it has been said—many here have, no doubt, heard the charge often made, if not here, at least elsewhere in this State—that I am in favor of slavery. My opinions, sir—and they are matured opinions, deliberately formed—I might say they are part of my constitutional inheritance—every thought and feeling and impulse of my heart—every verse and chapter

of my political creed—every syllable of my political creed—every syllable of my political education, teaches me that our political institutions are founded on equality—AND I REPUDIATE AS ONE OF THE FOULEST CALUMNIES, THAT I AM IN FAVOR OF SLAVERY IN ANY FORM.” (Applause.)

There was applause in that Adamantine Convention at these sentiments! He proceeded ;—

“ I look on Democratic institutions as having gone out into the earth on a great mission of light, disseminating knowledge, carrying the glad tidings of freedom and good will to men—and second only in their fertilizing influences to the benign spirit of the Christian religion itself. I believe that the work of extending freedom to all mankind cannot be accomplished in man’s brief moment—but that that mission is abroad and will accomplish its good works in the time of Him who controls the destiny of nations. MY POSITION, THEN, IS NOT IN FAVOR OF SLAVERY, AND NOT FAVORING THE INSTITUTION, I CANNOT FAVOR ITS EXTENSION. I REPUDIATE THE INSTITUTION IN ALL ITS FORMS, AND IN ALL PLACES, WHETHER AT THE NORTH OR SOUTH, THE EAST OR THE WEST, WHETHER THE BONDSMAN BE BLACK OR WHITE, AND WHETHER THE LIMB OR THE MIND BE HELD IN SERVITUDE.”

Yet, avowing these sentiments in a Convention which has been held within seven years, he now dares to affect holy horror with regard to every one who has ever favored the Wilmot Proviso!

Again, upon the subject of slavery, Mr. Dickinson said ;—

“ But I stand here to-day, in the spirit of Democracy, to invoke every one, whether here or elsewhere—in the populous city or in the log hut beyond the mountains—to come up to the support of Democracy—and, laying aside non-essentials, to take the great cardinal principles of early faith, and with them march forward to victory. On this territorial slavery question, my position is this: *I am*, as an individual and a legislator, *not in favor of the extension of slavery*, but OUT AND OUT, UP AND DOWN, LIVE OR DIE, I AM OPPOSED TO ITS EXTENSION. (Applause.) That is understood, I suppose.”

He then goes on to describe what he would do in the Territories if he lived there, in this language ;—

“ I would simply stand guard on the frontier. I would not act myself nor let any one else act ; I would not permit laws by Congress to extend, nor ask for laws to prohibit, but let the people of the territory take care of it, as they are so soon to be States. I would not oppose slavery extension in advance, by law, or extend it by law. Both extremes of opinion can stand by, and suffer the people of the territory, already a State, except in power, to dispose of the question with propriety and in peace.”

Again ;—

“ IF I SAID ANYTHING I WOULD SAY THAT I AM NOT IN FAVOR OF THE EXTENSION OF SLAVERY. \* \* \* \* I WOULD SAY FURTHER, THAT I WOULD STAND THERE, IF YOU PLEASE, LIKE HIM OF THE FLAMING SWORD ; AND THAT THEIR FIRST EFFORT WHICH PROPOSED TO EXTEND SLAVERY THERE, I WOULD OPPOSE.”

How cordially the entire Hunker faction approved of Mr. Dickinson's sentiments, may be understood from the following remarks of the *Argus*, of August 29th, 1849. Mr. Croswell then wrote—

“ THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION.—We bring the debates down to the afternoon of the third day. \* \* \* \* The speech of the Hon. D. S. Dickinson, in to-day's report, will be read with attention and gratification by his Democratic friends in and out of the State, as an able exposition of his views of the slavery question, and of the designs of its agitators.”

Enough of Mr. Dickinson, although, if space allowed, an admirable article might be copied from a number of the Charleston *Mercury*, of 1853, in which his later speeches are dissected, and held up as shallow, hollow-hearted *deceptions*, for the purpose of imposing upon the Southern public. •

Where was Mr. BEARDSLEY upon the slavery question, prior to 1850 ? From 1839 to 1844, Mr. Beardsley was notoriously affected with Seward principles, and was one of the foremost of the cor-



ruptionists who opposed the election of Silas Wright, in 1846. He was a prominent Conservative, and, as such, betrayed the Regular Democracy during his Congressional career. As a member of the House of Representatives, he insisted vehemently upon the reception of the petitions to abolish slavery in the district of Columbia, and was understood to sympathize with the views they expressed. He shared the opinions of Mr. Dickinson, in 1847, and exerted his influence to heal the divisions of the party in 1849, zealously approving of the anti-slavery resolutions of the Hunker Rome Convention, in hopes that unity of the Democracy would secure his own personal aggrandizement.

Where, in the year 1849, were Messrs. STEPHENS, WARD, NIVEN, JOB PIERSON, J. W. THOMPSON, DODGE, THOMPSON, BROWN, ROBINSON, ADAMS, HAVENS, WEST, EVANS, and JACKSON, on the subject of slavery, all of whom were at Rome in that year, and are now Hard appointees to the coming National Convention?

At the Hunker Rome Convention of 1849, Mr. Chatfield introduced a series of resolutions, which began with the following words:—

*“Resolved, THAT WE ARE OPPOSED TO THE EXTENSION OF SLAVERY TO THE FREE TERRITORY OF THE UNITED STATES.”*

These resolutions, at a Convention at which nearly all the men were present, who now affect to have been “sound” (?) at that time, were adopted with enthusiastic applause, and with but two dissenting voices. Crafty old

Beardsley, assured the Convention "that *every step* it had taken met with *his most unqualified and hearty approval.*" Dickinson then delivered the abolition address from which we have given extracts. Messrs Dayton, Peckham, Chancellor Walworth, Gen. Halsey, Lockwood, of Erie, Bowne, Cutting, and others, made approving speeches, and a degree of unanimity prevailed, which could only have been produced by a general feeling that "the utmost verge of concession short of dishonor," as was remarked by Mr. Cutting, was necessary, in order to save the State Democracy from entire dissolution.

Something must here be said, with regard to the *perfidy to the South*, in 1849, of the leading Hunkers of 1848. The majority of the State party had voted for Gen. Cass, simply because he was the national candidate of the Democracy. This was the conduct of the Hunker SOFTS. The course pursued by the HARDS was not so laudable. They went to Baltimore in 1848, where they secured admission, in spite of the regularity of organization of their adversaries, *solely on the ground that they were national on the subject of slavery!* They, nevertheless, returned to their homes, ate up their own words, and, but a short time after, avowed themselves opposed to the "*extension of Slavery in the Territories!*" They totally reversed their ground within one year. Having fought for the federal offices upon a Southern platform, they skipped over to the rankest Free Soilism, in order to spread with butter the State slices of their mouldy loaves. So eager were they for the spoils that they had barely shame enough to add to Mr. Chatfield's resolution, a saving

clause—both contradictory and hypocritical—explanatory of past conduct. This clause was as follows :—

“But we do not regard the slavery question in any form of its agitation, or any opinion in relation thereto, as a test of political faith, or as a rule of party action.”

It was also

*Resolved*, That the power of Congress over slavery in the territories, and the particular modes of legislation thereon, are among Democrats, controverted questions, and that we concede to every one in relation thereto, the undisputed right of opinion, not regarding any particular mode of constitutional construction on this question as a part of the Democratic creed, or essential to friendship with our Democratic brethren in this State or in any section of the Union.”

No wonder that the Southern press of 1849 and 1850, contained outbursts of astonishment at the inconsistency of these resolutions. with the Joseph Surface pretensions of the Hunkers in 1848. They were equivalent to saying—“We are all Free Soilers—dyed in the wool Wilmot Proviso men—but it is necessary to *throw dust in the eyes of the South*, and, therefore, we are opposed to making our convictions a party test!” Well may the Hard pamphleteer say, that the “re-union of 1849 was humiliating to the Hunkers.” It was more than that,—it was disgraceful and dishonorable to the anti-Wright, anti-Jackson, Sewardite ADAMANTINES, who consented for “filthy lucre’s” sake, to adopt one scale of principles for the State, and another for the country.

If the Hards had first been “*obscured*” in their views upon the subject of slavery, and afterwards come over to sound principles, little could be urged against them upon this point. But, after having been Free Soilers, they denied the fact, in order to obtain, for the Southern political market, a lever of calumny against the Softs.

The development of sound views, respecting slavery, has been a slow, tedious process. Indeed, until the Kansas Nebraska Bill was passed, a constitutional finality was never reached upon this all important subject. Our wisest statesmen have momentarily doubted, and it has only been since Franklin Pierce became President, and Senator Douglass introduced his immortal resolutions, that a clear range of vision has been possible, for the masses of the public.

In the early part of 1847, the Legislatures of ALL the Northern States, (excepting Iowa), passed resolutions in favor of the Wilmot Proviso. About half of these States were Democratic. An universal delusion prevailed with regard to the matter, which it has required deliberation to correct; but which has finally resulted in *unanimity* of sentiment among the Democracy at the North as well as South, so that *no true Democrat any where* is now a Free Soiler; or opposed to the Kansas Nebraska law.

§ 2. THE SOFTS.—On the 6th day of September, 1855, the Soft General Committee, in Tammany Hall, adopted a resolution, which it was intended should embody such opinions as *all* regular Democrats could subscribe to, as their platform, for the election about to be held, which was the last that has taken place in the State. It was as follows:—

“ *Resolved*, THAT WE ARE OPPOSED TO THE REPEAL OF THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA ACT; and that we have perceived with deep regret that an interpretation has been given to the amendment of Mr. Van Buren to Mr. Cassidy’s resolution, as though it were at variance with the known approbation by all sound Democrats of the principles of popular sovereignty; whereas it was on the contrary, as was at the time expressly understood, the expression of an abstract opinion, based upon the absolute

necessity of carrying out fully the principles of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, without interference from any other quarter whatsoever."

This resolution was adopted by a majority of 57 to 1. It was intended, not only to express the most explicit adhesion to the doctrine of territorial Sovereignty; but as a proclamation, in advance, to Free Soilers, that their votes were not wanted, at the impending election. It was a warning to those men who signed the document, which appeared in the Evening Post on the 17th May, and was copied, the next day, into the New York Herald, that they should *then* seek refuge where they legitimately belonged, with Black Republican traitors. It was also a manifesto to the South that, even in purely local legislation, the Softs were faithful to national principles, and rejected the assistance of the old Barnburner leaven, as they had already eschewed coalition with Adamantine Know Nothingism.

On the 3d of September, the Young Men's Democratic Union Club spoke, as follows, with its usual explicitness, upon the same subject, in preparation for the same campaign:—

*Resolved,* That we are in favor of the Kansas and Nebraska Bill in all its details, without hesitation or reservation.

Nor must it be forgotten that the *first public act of approval of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill at the North, was made by the Softs* in Tammany Hall, early in February, 1854, in their General Committee, and again on the 16th day of March, 1854, in general assembly, in the same venerable edifice. And that doctrine has often been repeated since, and has never been departed from.

In January, 1856, the Softs held their next Convention.

The subject was brought forward once more and rescued from all doubt. They took the resolution of the Democratic caucus in Congress as their model, and

“ *Resolved*, That the Democracy of New-York deem this a fit occasion to *tender to their fellow-citizens of the whole Union their heartfelt congratulations on the triumph, in the recent elections in several of the Northern, Eastern, and Western States, of the principles of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill*, and to state their devotion to civil and religious liberty, which have been so violently assailed by a secret political order known as the Know Nothing party; and, though in a minority, we ever hold it to be our highest duty to preserve our organization, and continue our efforts in the maintenance and defence of Democratic principles, and the constitutional rights of every section and every class of citizens, against their opponents of every description whatever, whether so-called Republicans, Know-Nothings, or Fusionists; and to this end, we look with confidence to the support and approbation of all good and true men, friends of the Constitution and the Union.”

To this resolve, and a number of others in the same spirit, there was but one dissenting voice. The principles embodied in this last resolution, are therefore held by *all* Softs in the State of New York; and they require no alliances to secure a vast majority for the candidates to the Presidency and Vice-Presidency, who shall be nominated by the Cincinnati Convention.

The difficult position of the Softs, attacked as they have been, by Adamantine Know-Nothings from without, and undermined by Free Soilers in their own ranks, who forced a way into their conventions, is now well understood by those who have closely studied their history. It has been the cause of crimination and re-crimination, charge and counter-charge. Yet the more critical the examination which is made, the more luminous the fact will appear, that the Softs have possessed, at the darkest moments, an inherent, vital, national strength, which must overcome

every obstacle. They now shine forth with a pristine purity, which deserves the endorsement of the Democracy of the country. Their sun contains no spot, excepting those which exist in the eyes of their jealous rivals and enemies ; their strength augments daily—and they are destined to restore the days of national rule in the Empire State, which Adamantine treachery has so long broken.

## CHAPTER VII.

## ADAMANTINE KNOW-NOTHINGISM.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD has probably been, throughout his public career, the most unscrupulous adept in political profligacy of every description, that the United States has ever produced. Scarcely a single mischievous heresy has sprung into existence, during the last eighteen years, with which his name is not connected. Out of the corruption, produced by his intrigues, first sprang into being the modern party monster called Know-Nothingism.

With the downfall of the hopes of the Whig party, in the mongrel state to which Sewardism had reduced it in the City of New York, fell the hopes of the army of Abolition office seekers in that metropolis, and arose, simultaneously, a feeling of disappointed rage against the foreign population, which had largely contributed to elect General Pierce. In spite of the efforts of Thurlow Weed, and others of Seward's friends, whose interests demanded a serried, unbroken front among Abolitionists and Free Soilers, the "*boys*" of New York became, for a while, uncontrollable. They founded the Know Nothing Association.

Throughout the year 1854, recruits were so rapidly drawn to the new order, by the union which it proffered to demagogues, of mystery and profitable patriotism, that all those factionists were attracted to it, who were willing to accept its assistance, with ulterior ends. It was notorious, from the beginning, that the Abolitionist leaders



of the Northern States, had resolved to make use of the Know-Nothings, to subserve their own purposes, and divide the South. Nevertheless, the Hard Shell faction of New York State, inconsistently with their affected "soundness" (?) upon the Slavery question, were among the first and most eager of those who courted alliance with these fanatics.

Among the first individuals to join the Know Nothings in the State of New York, was Mr. *Minor C. Story*, the notorious Adamantine conspirator, whose name has been mentioned, as having largely contributed to the treachery and deception, of the 13th September, 1853. This gentleman was a noisy supporter of the claims of George Law, at the Philadelphia Convention.

*Ira P. Barnes*, of Chenango, the first Chairman of the Hards after their secession, has also held conspicuous office in a Know Nothing lodge.

Besides these two gentlemen, the following, and perhaps more—AT LEAST TWENTY TWO OUT OF THE TWENTY NINE WHO SECEDED FROM SYRACUSE IN 1853, HAVE TAKEN DEGREES IN THE KNOW NOTHING ORDER.

*Daniel D. Campbell*, of Schenectady, Vice President ; *Robert H. Shankland*, Cattaraugus, V. P., founder of the Otsego County '*Examiner*,' Know Nothing and editor of the *American Union* Know Nothing paper in Cattaraugus ; *Pliny M. Bromley*, of Monroe, Secretary ; *John S. Nafew*, Albany, (member of the order of United Americans ;) *Stephen Clarke*, contesting delegate, Albany, elected State Treasurer on the Know Nothing ticket of 1855 ; *Wm. Eggleston*,

Albany, contesting delegate, new Superintendent of the first Section of the Erie Canal, appointed by the Fillmore Canal Board : *Benj. F. Chamberlain*, Cattaraugus : *Addison D. Adams*, Chenango ; *John Wheeler*, New York. Know Nothing candidate for Congress in 1854 : *John S. Emans*, Dutchess : *F. Henry Barnard*, Monroe ; *John Murdock*, Monroe ; *Jerome B. Ryerson*, Niagara : *J. W. Graves*, Orleans ; *J. R. Pratt*, Ontario ; *Tobias Bouck*, Schoharie ; *A. D. Wait*, Washington : *David Barret*, do. ; *Samuel Stover*, Rennselaer, K. N. Orator ; *Chas. J. Wilbur*, Rennselaer, delegate, in 1856, to the Know Nothing National Convention at Philadelphia, which nominated Fillmore and Donelson, and a supporter thereof.\*

\* In the papers which sustained the seceding movement of 1853, (see *Albany Argus* of October 11.) before the Know-Nothing tendencies were fully developed, the following changes have occurred :

*Daily Courier*, Buffalo, sustains regular Soft Democratic organization.

*Evening Post*, do. do. do.

*Daily Argus*, Albany, do. do.

*The Union*, Watertown, do. do.

*The Gazette*, Hudson, do. do.

*The Herald*, Sandy Hill, gone over to Know-Nothing organization.

*The Democrat*, Kingston, do. do.

*The Republican*, Ellicottville, do. do.

*Republican*, Glen's Falls, do. do.

*Times*, Orleans, do. eo.

*Spirit of the Times*, Batavia, do. do.

*Daily National Democrat*, New York, discontinued, the Editor C. C. Burr, now editor of a Know-Nothing paper in Jefferson Co. The daily issue changed to the *News*, "Hard."

*Daily Advertiser*, Rochester, owned by Know-Nothings and supporting both the Hard and Know-Nothing causes.

*Prattsville Advocate*, Green County, discontinued.

*Democrat*, Whitehall, do.

*Democrat*, Adams, Jefferson County, do.

*Democrat*, Addison, Steuben County, do.

*Jeffersonian*, Malone, Franklin County, do.

*Republican*, Utica, do.

This appalling statement has been repeatedly published in the New York State papers. It abundantly proves what the character was, of the men who created the Hard schism.

The Hard delegation to Cincinnati, presents an equally black list of avowed members and champions of the Order. *Samuel S. Bowne*, of the 19th District is one of these. His alternate, *L. J. Burdett*, is the Editor of the "Examiner," the K. N. paper of Otsego. *E. Darwin Smith*, of the 29th district is another, who was last fall the candidate of the American Party, for Supreme Court Judge, and elected as such. *J. B. Crosby*, *Joseph Sibley* and *J. C. Paterson*, delegates and alternates from the same district, are Know Nothings also. *E. D. Smith*, of the 21st District, is of the same order, as well as *Wm. G. Sands*, his alternate *N. S. Benton*, the alternate from the 17th District, is the K. N. State Auditor—the highest place in the gift of the "American" State officers. *S. S. Wendell*, alternate from the Albany District, is of the same stamp. *John S. Nafew*, the other alternate from that district, is a member of the order of the United Americans the parent society of the Know Nothings, *H. Goldlick* of the 31st District, and his alternate, *H. N. Hewes*, are both members of the Order, *G. P. Pelton*, alternate from the 12th District, was delegate from Poughkeepsie, on the 18th of September, 1855, to a Know Nothing Convention of the 2d Judicial District, and, on the 26th October of the same year, a delegate to the

Know Nothing County Convention at Peekskill. He was, that fall, a delegate to three Know Nothing Conventions and two Hard Shell Conventions. *Charles Gray*, of the 17th District, is a member of the Order. *Orville Clarke*, of the 15th District, was the Know Nothing candidate for Congress, in 1854. *W. Williams*, of the 32d District is also a member of the Order, as indeed have been, or now are, many other delegates claiming admission to the Convention.

Before the nomination of Fillmore and Donelson by the Know Nothing National Convention, it was believed that there was a chance for the selection of a very prominent 'Hard' by that body, for one or the other of the highest offices. That hope has now been disappointed ; and the motive for conciliating the Know Nothing organization, by giving prominence and a democratic countenance to its leading men, and by the support of its candidates, is said to have ceased. The delegates who seek admission into the Convention, may, therefore, disavow any present connection with the Order, but they cannot deny their past affiliation with it ; nor that, if rejected by a Democratic Convention, they have the full right to take their places, and continue their unbroken communion with the American Party.

In the State election of 1854, the Hards were so divided by men who professed to be Democrats, while secretly belonging to the secret society, that the Know Nothing influence prevailed. The Hard ticket contained the names of two Know Nothings of the third degree, i. e. *Clark Burnham* for Canal

Commissioner, and *Abram Vernam*, for State Prison Inspector. Nevertheless, the Know Nothing Hards split their ticket, refused to vote for Bronson for Governor, and cast their suffrages for Ullman. The result showed the extent of the amalgamation of this section with the Know Nothing party, and its consequent disorganization :

Democratic.		Whig.	
Governor Seymour,	156,495	Clark,	158,804
Canal Com., Clark,	125,210	Fitzhugh,	161,006
Know Nothing.		Hard.	
Gov'r. Ullman,	122,282	Bronson,	33,850
Canal Com., Williams,	58,244	Burnham,	120,747

The 86,897, which Burnham received over Bronson, was the vote of the Know Nothing party, upon a secret understanding of mutual support.

This is the faction which asks for seats in the Cincinnati Convention ! One hundred thousand foreign born Democrats in the State of New York cry out—No.\*

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\* The charge of Know-Nothingism against the Hards, is felt by themselves to be unanswerable. The *Washington Star* lately remarked that " forty *Democratic* delegates" to the National Convention, were members of the secret order, The context showed that the Hards were meant. The article was written against them, and in favor of the Softs. Will it be believed that the *Daily News*—the miserable little print, which is the exponent of the faction in New York city—copied the *Star's* denunciation, changing words to suit itself, and informed its readers, for several successive days, that some of the Soft delegates were tainted with the K. N. heresy ! Repeatedly as the *forgery* was pointed out, correction was refused, and a series of editorials, based upon the shallow trick, was initiated. The *News* did not dare, and never attempted, to reply to the charge against its own faction, and resorted to a literary crime to cover the disgrace of its leaders.

## CHAPTER VIII.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.

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1. The very name "*Hards*," which the faction arrayed in opposition to the Regular Democracy have assumed, is their own condemnation. It signifies the impracticable, unconciliatory, arrogant character of their association. Observance of the precept "principles not men," has never been swerved from by the party of Jefferson, and of which Madison, Monroe and Jackson have been such eminent apostles. The mantle of those lamented patriots has fallen upon great and worthy men. Pierce, Douglass, Cass, Marcy, Hunter, Guthrie, Buchanan, and a host of others, still shed forth bright light from the Republican firmament. They will never permit their names to be stained, by participation in the ambitions of local demagogues, whose pocket-deep patriotism seeks to dam up the streams of national progress, for the exclusive benefit of their own political grist-mills.

2. The identical men who, in 1836-7, abandoned the principles of Andrew Jackson, opposed Silas Wright, and followed in the footsteps of Senator Tallmadge, are now leaders of the Adamantines. They have had but one end in view, during those twenty years—to secure the advancement of their own individual interests. To these, they have sacrificed political truth, party faith, and the welfare of

the Democracy. They have betrayed those who trusted them ; made unprincipled alliances ; apostatized, and recanted, and then apostatized again ; violated compacts ; and, with such antecedents, still lay claim to national sympathy, founded upon misrepresentation, calumny and falsehood.

3. Previous to 1847, the Hard Hunkers were Free Soilers—many of them Sewardites. In 1848, they affected nationality upon the subject of Slavery, in order to gain allies outside of the State, and access to the Baltimore Convention. In 1849, they free-soilized again, and adopted an anti-Slavery platform. In 1853, they once more assumed an attitude favorable to Southern interest, for the same purpose as in 1848, viz., to procure admission to the Convention, to be held, in a few days, at Cincinnati. It is easy to foresee where they will be in November next, and in 1857. Many of them have already menaced that, if rejected by the Democratic National Council, they will join the Know-Nothings. Swallowed up, therefore, by that association—abolitionized as it is in the North—they will first vote for Fillmore, and, when he shall have been routed, go over, body and soul, to Black Republican treason.

4. Twenty-nine Hard delegates seceded in 1853, from a Convention, at Syracuse, consisting of one hundred and twenty-eight members. This secession was the origin of the present split in the Democratic party in the State of New York. *Twenty-two out of the twenty-nine revolting Delegates, including the*

*President and Vice-President* of that minority, have since affiliated themselves to the Know-Nothing order.

5. A large number of the Hard delegates and alternates to Cincinnati—it is estimated about forty—are, or have been, members of Know Nothing lodges.

6. The opposition to the Hards of 100,000 of those who are foreign born Democratic voters in the State of New York, is so bitter, that a cry of amazement and grief would arise from them, if the Adamantine delegates should be permitted to have any voice whatsoever in the proceedings of the National Convention.

7. The Softs, unaided by the Hards, can poll a larger vote than by their assistance. With an untrammelled, unfettered organization, they can carry the State of New York triumphantly. A divided, discordant organization would, on the contrary, present a formidable obstacle to success. The past has shown that the Hards will not act harmoniously, excepting on the basis of their own exclusive rule; and, even if their professions to the contrary were credible, the party would be seriously damaged by the Know-Nothing taint which adamantine co-operation would give it.

8. The Hards do not possess a single leader, who enjoys the confidence of the people. They cannot present a man, who has not forfeited esteem, either by demagogue precedents, freakish abandonment of party ties, apostacy, unreliability, treachery, or the rankest political and pecuniary profligacy.



9. Those of the Hard rank and file, who are not Know Nothings—especially the hitherto misled minority of the adopted citizens of the city of New York and Brooklyn—already foresee the disgrace of their delegates at Cincinnati, and have signified, in great numbers, their intention to adhere, hereafter, to the Softs. Prominent men among the delegates themselves, have grown ashamed of the miserable record of their faction, and signified their reluctance to go to the National Council.

Delegates to the National Convention at Cincinnati, Representatives of the Democracy of the North, South, East and West—of every State in this mighty Union—there never has been a moment in the history of this country, when prudence, forethought, justice, wisdom, and firm adherence to the principles of the Democratic party, were more necessary than at the present time. The welfare of the nation, at this critical epoch, rests especially in your hands. The man whom you shall nominate to the Chief Magistracy of the Republic, will certainly be the next President of the United States. The platform which you shall adopt, will be the basis of legislation for years to come.

There has been a period when the State of New York held its head high in your National Councils. For a few years past, its light has been obscured by the treachery and ambition of the Hard faction, whose emissaries present themselves at your doors, demand-

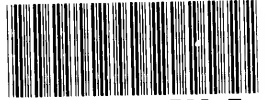
ing, under false pretences, and with a threat, if refused, to support the Know-Nothings, to be admitted to fellowship with you. The Regular Democracy of the State of New York repudiate these men. They ask you, however, to examine their claims, and, when this shall have been done, to send them back with ignominy to their homes.

The Softs, consistently with their name, have, for seven years, exhausted every effort at reconciliation. Repeated and painful experience has convinced them that truces are hollow, and compromises disastrous, with such enemies, and that the supremacy of the party must depend upon its unity of action. The Softs, as the Regular Democracy of the State of New York, solemnly appeal to you to restore that unity, and promise in return an overwhelming majority, in November next, for

THE CANDIDATES OF THE CINCINNATI CONVENTION,



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